CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND SECOND PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 15 August 1991, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Horacio Arteaga (Venezuela)

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The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I declare open the 602nd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

First of all, I would like to make my opening statement. It is an honour for me to take up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament on behalf of Venezuela. On this occasion I should like to emphasize the irrevocable commitment of Venezuela and the President of the Republic, Carlos Andrés Pérez, to the cause of disarmament, which in this Conference enjoys a forum of fundamental and prime importance. As far as we are concerned, everything that has to do with efforts to promote the different and complex aspects of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, is of fundamental significance, and we will therefore continue to participate actively in this and other relevant forums. Venezuela believes in the potentialities of this Conference and the joint capacity to move forward, ever more resolutely, towards the goals we have set ourselves, in accordance with the requirements and expectations of these tumultuous times.

I should like to express my gratitude and sincere congratulations to Ambassador Stephen Ledogar of the United States for the effective, skilled and responsible way in which he chaired the work of the Conference during his term. We truly appreciated his presidency. I also extend my appreciation and congratulations to the distinguished Ambassadors Rasaputram of Sri Lanka, Hyltenius of Sweden, Batsanov of the Soviet Union and Solesby of the United Kingdom, who have wisely discharged that function since the beginning of the current year.

I wish to express my complete readiness and full determination in discharging the tasks that fall to me during this period, which includes the drafting and final adoption of the report that the Conference has to submit to the forty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly. I am certain that I will enjoy the valuable cooperation of all the distinguished delegates and the always efficient support of the secretariat, Ambassadors Komatina and Berasategui, in carrying out my tasks, especially in drafting and adopting the report, which, as you know, reflects the intensive work carried out in the course of the year.

The international situation in which we find ourselves is different from that of only a few years ago. The historic events of recent times have marked the abandonment of old antagonisms and intransigence, and have allowed the emergence of better prospects for peace, solidarity and understanding in the concert of nations. The dialogue and openness which now characterize world events have helped to foster disarmament agreements and confidence-building measures, and should encourage greater progress in this field in an upward process. Even such serious and regrettable crises as the Gulf war served to make the international community aware of the threat posed by the use of weapons of mass destruction and the need to adopt concrete measures to eliminate that danger.

We welcomed with great satisfaction the strategic nuclear arms reduction treaty (START) recently signed by the United States and the Soviet Union after nine years of painstaking negotiations. This is a very important step in the

(The President)

history of the bilateral negotiations on arms control, which we hope will generate an atmosphere of greater transparency and trust in international relations, as well as future disarmament agreements which will make it possible to replace nuclear deterrence by a strategy founded on common security. It is also our hope that agreements of such significance will have a favourable impact on the tenacious disarmament efforts being pursued in the multilateral sphere, and specifically in this Conference.

It is always hoped that the message forwarded to the United Nations General Assembly by the Conference on Disarmament in its annual report will record progress in the negotiations carried out under its auspices. On this occasion it is striking that genuine progress has been made in dealing with the subject of chemical weapons. Of clear importance in these negotiations is the inclusion of the reference to the prohibition of use in the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee, as well as in relevant parts of the draft convention, and provisions on the total destruction of chemical weapons. We recognize the encouraging turn taken by these negotiations as a result of the decision of the United States Administration not to use chemical weapons against any country, in any circumstances, and to destroy all its arsenals of such weapons. As stipulated in its mandate, the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons is to intensify its work with the aim of achieving final agreement on the convention by 1992. I should like to encourage all delegations to continue their efforts to that end.

With regard to other items on the agenda I should add that a new methodology of work has been established in the various committees, which has allowed a better assessment of the different aspects relating to the items before them. I think that as a result of this work we will be able to make progress subsequently in a more thorough analysis with a view to adopting measures.

Recently the informal meetings on items 2 and 3 of our agenda, nuclear disarmament and prevention of a nuclear arms race, were completed. In the discussion the various positions were set out in detail and important information was received on various initiatives of special interest. I cannot fail to mention in particular the consultations carried out by Ambassador Kamal of Pakistan on improving the functioning and effectiveness of the work of the Conference. They undoubtedly constitute an appropriate basis for the future consideration of this subject. Furthermore, the consultations carried out on the expansion of the membership of the Conference have been useful in clarifying positions and allowing more thorough consideration of the subject.

I would like to wish the chairmen of the various committees every success in the process of negotiation and adoption of their reports. I am entirely at your disposal to cooperate wherever I can. Let us make the best possible use of the time available to make progress in our work.

(The President)

On the list of speakers for today are the representatives of Argentina, the United States of America, Canada (who will be speaking as the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events. I now give the floor to the first speaker on the list, the representative of Argentina, Ambassador García Moritán.

Mr. GARCÍA MORITÁN (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): I would like to express my delegations particular satisfaction, Mr. President, that a representative such as youself of a great Latin American country has taken up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament today. I am certainly not the first or the last Argentine diplomat to have the honour and pleasure of working under your guidance. I witnessed the way in which your extensive diplomatic experience made itself felt on the regional stage when you were Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Venezuela, and we have every confidence that our negotiations will benefit at this final stage from your personality, experience and professionalism.

A little more than a year ago we and the distinguished delegation of the Federative Republic of Brazil began the practice of making joint statements at this Conference on substantive questions of common interest. At that time I had occasion to set forth some joint general comments in relation to the first item on our agenda. At the beginning of the current session, the distinguished Ambassador Rubens Ricupero - whom I will miss very much following his departure from this conference - addressed the Conference in connection with the Declaration on Common Nuclear Policy signed by the Presidents of our two countries at Foz do Iguaçu in November 1990. On that occasion, the Ambassador of Brazil said that the joint machinery and procedures established by our countries in the nuclear field were the corollary and natural result of broad, stable and close cooperation embracing all major fields. These achievements in turn proved that confidence-building in the nuclear field could be achieved through close cooperation in the technical and political fields on the basis of openness and transparency.

This morning, speaking once again on behalf of the two delegations, I would like to point out that under the first stage outlined in the Declaration, on 18 July 1991, in Guadalajara, Mexico, on the occasion of the recent summit of heads of state and government of Latin American countries, Presidents Menem and Collor signed an "Agreement between the Argentine Republic and the Federative Republic of Brazil for the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy". In operational terms, the agreement formally establishes a joint accounting and control system for nuclear materials, with the aim of verifying compliance with commitments entered into, in particular as regards surveillance of all nuclear materials in all nuclear activities carried out in the two countries. To administer the system, the agreement creates a supervisory Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control. This agency will be composed of two bodies - one of a political nature, the Commission, which will supervise the overall operation of the system, and a

(Mr. Garcia Moritán, Argentina)

technical body, the Secretariat, which will coordinate the actions necessary to gather information, carry out inspections and process the data collected. Moreover, as additional and, I think, unquestionable evidence of the peaceful nature of the nuclear programmes of the two countries, we are negotiating a joint safeguards agreement with IAEA.

Brazil and Argentina consider that such initiatives constitute a full, sufficient and verifiable guarantee of the peaceful aims of their nuclear programmes. However, considering the importance they attach to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the two countries will adopt initiatives whereby it will enter fully into force, including action to update and improve the Treaty.

The agreement between the Argentine Republic and the Federative Republic of Brazil for the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy requires legislative approval in the two countries for its entry into force, and the text will be circulated in this Conference in due course.

The agreement consolidates in a legally binding instrument the special relations of cooperation existing between our countries in the nuclear field. In this context, it should be noted that the regime established by the agreement will be complemented by measures in the field of economic integration aiming at the free movement of nuclear materials and equipment between the two countries. This aspect is also of particular importance because it is an integral part of a more comprehensive plan for development encompassing all spheres of production in the two countries and extending to Uruguay and Paraguay in the context of the Southern Common Market.

In this endeavour, which involves breaking out of underdevelopment once and for all, we give due priority to scientific and technological programmes. We are very pleased to have arrived at an instrument which offers an appropriate response to the legitimate concerns which may be prompted by dual-use advanced technologies. This example of international cooperation demonstrates how it is possible to find the path to a wider exchange in such a way that advanced technologies do not remain the privilege of a few. In that context, the broad-ranging process of integration between Argentina and Brazil and its ramifications for the other countries of the sub-region demonstrate, in our view, how the indispensible possession of advanced technologies can be reconciled with a regional framework that is stable, predictable and free of suspicions from the security viewpoint.

The accidents of time and history have presented all of us with the unexpected opportunity of playing leading roles in a world of increasing interdependence and integration. Economic and industrial factors, and the transnational effects of technology, have created a network of mutual interests and confidence-building measures which allow us to deal multilaterally with political problems on different bases. In the view of Argentina and Brazil this situation requires a search for a clear, international consensus in key areas. In science and technology, it seems to us essential to embark on a detailed analysis on the basis of criteria which

(Mr. García Moritán, Argentina)

are more in keeping with the times. We pointed this out in a joint document at the United Nations Disarmament Commission. It seems that a process of this kind would require, on the one hand, that we tackle the qualitative problems related to weapons of mass destruction, and on the other hand, agree on balanced guidelines that take into account aspects connected with the dual use of any technology while at the same time not affecting or impairing the need for the continuous development, application and transfer of new technologies and the related economic and industrial requirements. As we are demonstrating in the regional framework, we believe that it is possible to establish appropriate confidence-building machinery aimed at strengthening international security with mutually complementary actions in an effective system of cooperation in advanced technologies.

In the political lexicon of our times the word "change" features as a constant. There is another which is perhaps used less frequently but has a particular priority in matters of security - "stability". Both concepts suggest that change, which must be promoted and monitored, requires an indispensable amount of global stability in order to generate an appropriate framework of peace and security. In this context, we believe that indispensable progress at the regional level should indisputably be accompanied by harmonization at the global level. The system of collective security envisaged by those who drafted the Charter of the United Nations now has a chance, in our view, to be translated into concrete terms. What needs to be done - no more and no less - is to define it and put it into effect in a balanced manner, perhaps in this very Conference.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of Argentina for his statement on behalf of the delegations of Argentina and Brazil, as well as the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I give the floor now to the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Ledogar.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): I take the floor today for several purposes. The first is to welcome, wholeheartedly, your accession to the CD presidency. Thank you for your kind words a few moments ago about my just concluded term of office. Yours, however, will be both more challenging and more extensive, but without question you are exactly the right diplomat with exactly the right talents to give us the precise direction and leadership that we will need. As I mentioned in my own closing speech last week, you have my full support and that of my delegation as you take on this important responsibility for the next several months.

Secondly, I would like to introduce a United States paper that deals with a national trial challenge inspection at a United States commercial chemical production facility last year. This inspection represents one of a series of such exercises that the United States Government is carrying out at commercial and government facilities. Rather than go into the details at this time of the lessons learned during this productive experience, I will simply note that the paper has been turned over to the secretariat for circulation as an official Conference document. It should be available to you shortly.

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

The third and fourth elements of my remarks today deal with chemical weapons, and with the report writing process in which the CD is now engaged. Although the latter item is more immediate in terms of the time pressures we face, I wish to make my principal remarks first on the far more important and central goal of our Conference at this moment: completion of a chemical weapons convention by 1992. Since President Bush announced his chemical weapons initiative last 13 May, the CW Ad Hoc Committee has made significant progress. Article I of the draft convention now explicitly bans use of chemical weapons, against anyone, under any circumstances. In article IV there is now no question about the obligation to complete the destruction of chemical weapons during the 10 years after the convention enters into force. Agreement seems near to place articles X and XI in appendix I of the "rolling text", and we should be able to take the same step with an improved article VI as well. We are now in the midst of serious exploration of challenge inspection, perhaps the thorniest issue in our convention. And we also believe that progress in a number of other areas such as jurisdiction and control will be reflected in the "rolling text".

Bearing in mind our goal, I submit to you that we must now make a conscious decision to direct our energies more closely on the major issues for the remainder of 1991. In my view there are currently four such issues at this stage: challenge inspection, verification in the chemical industry, the composition and decision-making process of the executive council, and universality. I will address each of these issues in turn.

On challenge inspection, as you know, the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, and Australia presented a new approach last month designed to move the Conference at last toward resolution of this key issue. The four delegations sought to strike the right balance between access necessary for effective verification, and the need to protect sensitive activities that are not related to chemical weapons and avoid potential abuse of challenge inspection provisions. The regime we propose balances all of the security interests of States parties. It will enhance prospects for universal compliance and, when it enters into force, will give the international inspectorate the ability to discover the facts. It will deter would-be violators, and at the same time provide States parties with reasonable protection of their legitimate activities.

No text is perfect. We have taken due note of the views expressed on the proposal in the Ad Hoc Committee. We are encouraged by the general support shown in discussions so far for the concept of graduated, managed access to challenged sites. We are aware that some delegations would prefer more mandatory access, and that others would like to see stronger mechanisms for protecting sensitive sites. We are also pleased that our proposal has generated useful conceptual discussion of the role of the executive council. Much remains to be thrashed out, but we are confident that we can reach consensus on this critical question.

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

With respect to monitoring the chemical industry, the proposal made by eight non-aligned delegations in July was a major advance. It preserves key features of the regime that is currently set forth in article VI of the "rolling text", but closes an important loophole that would have allowed many relevant facilities to escape inspection. As a result of the eight-delegation proposal the Ad Hoc Committee has almost reached consensus to extend the monitoring provisions in Article VI to all CW-capable facilities. Work remains to delimit the industry and exclude those not posing a risk and to work out the inspection regime, but we believe that the general support for coverage of such facilities should be reflected in appendix I of the "rolling text".

Much discussion has taken place on the selection process for facilities to be inspected. We, and many others, believe that the selection process must reflect security interests. Given the many thousands of relevant facilities, States parties must play a role in designating facilities for inspection. This approach is not challenge inspection in disguise. These inspections are routine, and will be conducted accordingly. We recognize the concerns of others about abuse through national selection and believe that safeguards must be incorporated, for instance agreed limits on the annual number of inspections in a given State. We are grateful for the work of the Chairman of Group B on this issue, and will give his proposed approach careful study.

Some have argued that the composition and decision-making process of the executive council can be settled only at the end of these negotiations. We believe, on the contrary, that broad consensus is developing in the Committee, and that agreement on the structure and operations of this vital executive body will help us settle other, more substantive, issues. We believe there is broad support for an executive council of approximately 20 to 25 members. Selection would be based on a combination of geographical and industrial criteria. Decision-making on substantive issues would be by a qualified majority. Several delegations have already expressed views on the executive council and we hope that Working Group C can take this up immediately.

The fourth major issue that I want to discuss is universality. How can the Conference structure the convention to encourage all States to join? I want to express my agreement with my distinguished Argentine colleague, Ambassador García Moritán, who noted last week that a chemical weapons convention is primarily a security agreement. Other delegations have pointed out the need to include restrictions and disincentives for countries who, after a reasonable period of time, choose to remain outside. We strongly agree. We have proposed that, after a suitable transition period, arrangements for trade in CW-related chemicals should discriminate against non-parties. Our proposal will require parties to refuse to trade in CW-related materials with all States that do not become parties to the CW convention within a reasonable period of time. These provisions relate directly to the central purpose of the convention, and to the security of future States parties. We will ask for your support on these grounds.

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

There is one more issue that I would like to discuss today, namely longstanding problems of "old" or "abandoned" chemical weapons. This issue is not now a major obstacle to completing the convention. If it can be resolved promptly it will not become one. However, we must come to grips with it. We recognize that this issue reflects a number of different problems, all of them politically sensitive. Concern has been expressed, for example, about negative public reaction to labelling such "chemical weapons" in the convention. The term "chemical weapons" has a powerful emotional and political impact and there is a risk of public misunderstanding. For this reason, we believe it would be useful to explore the possibility of a differentiated approach to the required declarations. This would ensure that the differing situations are not lumped together under the single heading of "chemical weapons".

Another concern is over the responsibility for destruction when chemical weapons produced by one State are found on the territory of another State. It would be best for such matters to be settled between the two States involved. In any case, we cannot afford to have a loophole allowing a State party to retain chemical weapons on its territory if not removed or destroyed by the State owning them.

Unfortunately, much of the discusson on these issues has taken place without adequate information. I propose to you that the Conference can no longer work on the basis of rumours and corridor conversations. We urge the Governments that have problems with old and abandoned chemical weapons to provide technical information on the nature of the problems that exist. This could be done, for example, during the meeting of destruction experts that will be held this fall. We believe that such information would not only help to clarify the situation, but also would facilitate cooperative efforts to ensure that the weapons are disposed of safely. In this connection, I would like to recall the offer of the United States to provide technical assistance for destruction of chemical weapons to any State faced with this problem.

On the subject of adequate information, a number of participants in the negotiations have not yet indicated whether or not they possess chemical weapons. We call on them to do so, in order that members of the conference can make an accurate assessment of the dimensions of the chemical weapons problem.

I would now like to review where we are at this stage in the CW negotiations. As I mentioned earlier, many of the issues on which we have made progress this summer were reflected in the CW Ad Hoc Committee Chairman's paper last spring as the key issues requiring political attention and which might ultimately be elements of a possible package. Earlier this summer the United States made substantial moves on many of these key issues, particularly on the questions of right of retaliation, and on our two per cent proposal to achieve universality, and also on articles X and XI. Additionally we have introduced provisions for challenge inspection and we stand ready to discuss the executive council and the issue of costs. In light of these steps, I

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

confess to some disappointment in recent days on both substantive and procedural grounds. We have heard threats by individual delegations that unless they get what they want in one article, they will hold up another article. Such tactical linkage which is devoid of substantive rationale only invites retaliation in kind.

At this stage in the negotiations, if we are to have a CW convention in 1992, we believe that all serious proposals, and especially proposals receiving broad support, should be reflected in appendix I of the "rolling text", if necessary with footnotes and/or brackets. The time has come to cease unfocused general discussions. If we are to find solutions to the issues, the best basis is actual language proposed for the convention. Let us cease arguing over the placement of papers in other appendices. Then we can focus our efforts on the proposed treaty text itself, seek compromises where possible and where not, clearly identify alternatives for political solution.

Let me add that we are disappointed that a small number of delegations are blocking agreement on a work programme to carry the CW Commitee through till next January. My Government finds this difficult to understand, in view of the opportunity to wrap these negotiations up and achieve a convention next year. My delegation does not consider this matter closed, and will continue to press for CW work during the eight weeks of the BWC Review Conference and the disarmament portion of the First Committee. To that end we call on capitals represented here to augment their delegations as necessary.

In my statement today I have outlined the areas of which I believe work should focus, and the approach we should take. Let me leave the subject of chemical weapons with a cautionary note. I have heard it said that some in this chamber believe that following the Gulf War and operation "Desert Storm", the United States has less interest in a CW convention. This argument holds that we have demonstrated that for ourselves, chemical weapons capability on the part of an aggressor can be handled with weapons in our conventional inventory, and that we and the Soviet Union have taken care of the problem of our own large CW stocks and security requirements with our bilateral arrangements.

This line of argument is mistaken. United States security will be enhanced by the convention. Furthermore, the United States has allies and friends around the world whose security, including security from chemical attack, is vital to us. The United States-Soviet bilateral agreement signed by Presidents Bush and Gorbachev 1 June last year is integrally linked with achievement of a CW convention. So we will continue to work as hard as ever for agreement here. It would, however, be equally mistaken to believe that the United States and its allies are more interested in achieving a CW convention than other members of our Conference, and accordingly that an increasing number of provisions unrelated to chemical weapons can be added to the Treaty in the expectation we will continue to make concessions. We are not les demandeurs in this negotiation. Conclusion of a CW convention will enhance the security of each and every State that becomes a party. This is important, a worthy goal: Let's keep it in sight.

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

Let me turn now to an area where our performance has been less than outstanding - the Conference's annual report-writing process. This process threatens to get out of control. I submit that we spend too much time (approximately 3 of our 24 working weeks) and too much money (well more than $US 1,000 a page) on report-writing. The time has come for reform.

During my recent CD presidency I made a serious attempt to reduce the CD report-writing effort in order to allocate more time to our CW negotiations. I suggested preparing a relatively brief report, based on the requirements of rule 45. This would have meant dropping the compilation of groups' political views on each agenda item - the most time-consuming, contentious and wasteful part of the report-writing effort. It replicates information available elsewhere, and it generates large quantities of political smoke and fire more appropriate to the General Assembly than to the more practical negotiating body we work in. Furthermore, the CD secretriat asked that the CW portion of the report be shortened by dropping appendix II, thereby saving a significant amount of money.

While these objectives had broad support, some participants insisted there could be no changes in cherished routines. Only in the case of the radiological weapons and outer space ad hoc committee reports have we thus far seen efforts made to shorten reports or eliminate political wrangling. Everywhere else we see business as usual - or worse. The NSA and NTB committee draft reports are already heavily politicized, in some cases with rhetoric reminiscent of the height of the cold war. In the NTB draft report one regional group has taken a verbatim transcript approach and is attempting to drive in more than eight full pages of text advertising or supporting its views. They have resorted to distortion of fact and misrepresentation of the views of others. The West was left with few options to achieve the necessary accuracy and balance, other than to draft eight pages of its own if it wished to propose them for bitter negotiation. So much for the effort to reduce the CD report-writing chore so as to devote more time to CW!

While I held your seat, Mr. President, my position required me to act evenhandedly and to take the views of all CD members and groups into account in conducting our business. To some extent I had to put my national role and objectives on the shelf during that period. That is no longer the case. While it may be too late for wholesale changes in the report-writing process, I propose that we try now to begin a less politicized and more cost-effective effort. Specifically, I would urge the negative security assurances and nuclear test ban ad hoc committee chairmen to try to limit political position statements by each group to no more than one or two pages each. This limit should also apply to the reports on CESNAR, PNW and CPD. My delegation is prepared to withhold consensus on those substantive sections of the CD report which are polemical, imbalanced, and unfactual.

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

These are drastic steps. At a time when we are trying to negoitiate an important global treaty, however, I believe they are absolutely essential. By consensus we set a deadline for ourselves of achieving a CW convention by 1992. We enshrined this goal in a revised mandate for the CW Ad Hoc Committee. Yet we are letting "business as usual" entangle us in sterile report-writing debates reminiscent of a time gone by.

Thus, I hereby request that the problematic committee contributions of this year be compressed and limited to each group's views and that the issue of CD report-writing be placed on the agenda of next year's open-ended consultations on improved and effective functioning. We must provide for a much briefer, cheaper and more useful report, which people might actually read. The current product meets almost none of these criteria.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of the United States of America for his statement and his kind words addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of Canada, Mr. Robertson, who, in his capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons will present the Committee's report, which has been distributed today as document CD/1099.

Mr. ROBERTSON (Canada): Mr. President, since this is the first time a member of our delegation has taken the floor since you assumed your presidency, allow me to begin by joining those previous speakers who have commended that fact and let me also assure you that the members of the Canadian delegation are willing and would be very pleased to assist you in the carrying out of your tasks in any way possible. You have a very long term ahead of you as our President, until the CD is re-established in 1992, and among the other issues you will be confronted with is that of assuring that useful work on the chemical weapons convention can be carried out during the inter-sessional period. We wish you every success.

Now I would like to say a few words in my capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons, and I take pleasure in introducing the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons, which is before you today in English under symbol CD/1099.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons was among the two committees re-established at the start of the Conference's session and I understand that it is the first to submit its report to the Conference. There are several reasons why this is so. One of them was the really excellent positive, cooperative and professional spirit displayed by delegations throughout the session in our consideration of the item. Another reason was the speedy resumption at the beginning of our work of the two-track approach to the issue: track A quickly resumed work on the draft articles of a convention on the prohibition of radiological weapons and track B continued to consider possible elements relevant to the prohibition of attacks against nuclear facilities.

(Mr. Robertson, Canada)

Yet another reason for the rapid presentation of this report was the energetic and skilled work performed by the coordinators of the two tracks, Mr. Scott Omene of Nigeria and Mr. Gueorgui Dimitrov of Bulgaria. I should like to express my personal appreciation as well as that of the members of the Ad Hoc Committee to them both for a job well done. Finally, a relevant factor that explains why our work moved along well in the Ad Hoc Committee was that it is done on the basis of texts presented from previous years. Thus little time is needed for general debate and the bulk of the work can be relegated to the two contact groups.

What did we accomplish this year? In general terms, at least compared to the dramatic movements we have seen and have heartily welcomed in other disarmament fields, it might appear that not much has been gained. However, through its regular albeit time-consuming, step-by-step approach to the issues before it, the Ad Hoc Committee has made relative progress.

With respect to the draft articles for a convention on the prohibition of radiological weapons, there is now in the text an alternative proposal to tackle the question of scope and definitions. Delegations will have this proposal under study during the inter-sessional period. New agreed texts were also elaborated to provide for amendments and for review conferences, while the verification and compliance provision was further refined.

As regards the possible elements relevant to a convention on the prohibition of attacks against nuclear facilities, let me first point out that the crucial question of the scope of an eventual convention, that is, what facilities would be protected, saw no movement. It is clear therefore that more time will still be needed on this point. However, further refinements and clarifications have been made to the elements dealing with the register and to parts of the verification and compliance schema.

In its conclusions, the Ad Hoc Committee has recommended that the Conference decide on an early re-establishment of the Committee next year. As outgoing Chairman, I thoroughly endorse this recommendation.

In closing I wish to take this opportunity to thank again all delegations for their contributions to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee and for their support to the Chair throughout the year. Allow me also to again congratulate the two coordinators of the contact groups, Mr. Omene and Mr. Dimitrov. And I also want to thank all the concerned members of the secretariat for their support and help.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons for introducing the Committee's report, and also for his kind words addressed to myself. I wish to convey our congratulations to Mr. Robertson on his guidance of the work of the Committee, which enabled it to reach consensus rapidly on the report he has just introduced. I intend to put the report, contained in document CD/1099, before the Conference for adoption at our next plenary meeting on Thursday 22 August.

(The President)

I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ambassador Solesby.

Miss SOLESBY (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): I should like first of all to join previous speakers in congratulating you, Mr. President, on your accession to your post. We all know well your wide experience and your skills and we have every confidence in the wise leadership you will give us during the remaining weeks of this session and beyond.

Today, I would like to make a statement regarding agenda items 2 and 3 on behalf of the Western Group.

In this time of profound and rapid change, the Western Group continues to attach significance to the nuclear items on our agenda. We welcome discussions in this forum regarding nuclear disarmament because we believe such discussions play a positive role in strengthening international security and stability in the nuclear age. However, it remains the view of the Western Group that the prevention of a nuclear war can only be dealt with satisfactorily in the broader context of the prevention of war in general. The real question at issue is how to maintain peace and international security in the nuclear age. The prevention of war in the nuclear age is a global concern and not merely the responsibility of certain States or military alliances. This fact has been sadly underscored by the tragic events of this past year in the Gulf.

Times are changing, more hopefully perhaps than at any time in history. But a time of change is inevitably a time of uncertainty, of turmoil, and fear as well as of hope. The challenge for all of us is to see that these changes are directed in peaceful and positive channels. Developments in East-West relations and in other regions suggest that real progress is possible in the field of arms control and disarmament. The changes that are taking place are bringing us closer to the realization of the vision of a more just, humane and democratic world. If sustained, these trends will strengthen the prospects for fundamental improvements in international relations, a prerequisite for real progress not just in nuclear disarmament but in all disarmament matters.

The basic goal of Western arms control and disarmament policy has been and continues to be to prevent war by strengthening security and increasing stability at the lowest level of forces and armaments consistent with the requirements for legitimate individual or collective self-defence. We are convinced that arms control and confidence-building measures will continue to help shape and consolidate the development of a new cooperative order, as envisaged in the United Nations Charter, in which no country need harbour fears for its security. The Western Group believes that negotiations in all regions of the world intended to reduce the risk of conflict, to eliminate arms races, and to build mutual confidence in an equitable and stabilizing manner can contribute significantly to international security.

(Miss Solesby, United Kingdom)

The Western Group of States have worked for many years to advance progress in the fields of non-proliferation and disarmament on a regional and global basis. The Gulf crisis demonstrated that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and of systems capable of delivering them, as well as excessive build-up of conventional arms, undermine international security and increase the risk of armed conflict throughout the world. To meet this challenge, we have renewed our commitment to the earliest possible achievement of advances in the international forums dealing with specific proliferation issues.

The Western Group is strongly committeed to, and will continue to work towards universal adherence to the non-proliferation Treaty. In this regard, the Western Group welcomes the recent important accessions in southern Africa to the Treaty and China's recent affirmation of its intention, in principle, to accede to the NPT. The other members of the Western Group also welcome France's decision, in principle, to accede to the Treaty. The Western Group calls on all States to become parties to the NPT, in that universal membership and full compliance with its provisions by all parties are important for the further strengthening of that Treaty. The Western Group supports the role of IAEA in facilitating the development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and in administering safeguards. We also support responsible export behaviour by States which are in a position to cooperate with others in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Recalling that it is incumbent upon all States to intensify their efforts and take steps to promote disarmament, the members of the Western Group observe with growing concern the acquisition and the development of ballistic missile technology for, possibly, other than peaceful purposes by an increasing number of States. The elimination of this potential source of international instability and insecurity requires work at the bilateral, regional and international levels. The Western Group welcomes the efforts made by some countries to improve their national export behaviour and also welcomes the wish of others to participate with the original seven countries in the Missile Technology Control Regime. We will urgently pursue efforts in the United Nations and elsewhere to address the problem of excessive build-up of arms by ensuring transparency and restraint.

We welcome the successful completion and continued implementation of the INF Treaty which has eliminated and entire class of nuclear weapons. We welcome too the exchanged instruments of ratification and protocols between the United States and the Soviet Union for the two nuclear testing treaties, the threshold test-ban Treaty and the peaceful nuclear explosion Treaty, on 11 December 1990 in Houston. We also welcome the START Treaty recently signed by Presidents Bush and Gorbachev which represents a major achievement in securing a more stable, predictable balance at lower levels of strategic nuclear forces. Once ratified, this treaty will reduce, over seven years, each side's strategic nuclear weapons from their current level of between 10,000 and 11,000 weapons down to between 8,000 and 9,000 weapons.

(Miss Solesby, United Kingdom)

The START agreement includes a major reduction in the most destabilizing and dangerous weapons, land-based ballistic missiles and their warheads, and places restrictions on specific types of strategic weapons.

We fully support the agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union to pursue new talks on strategic offensive arms, and on the relationship between strategic offensive and defensive arms. This agreement was outlined in the joint statement of 1 June 1990 on future negotiations on nuclear and space arms and further enhancing strategic stability.

With regard to the implementation of agreements to facilitate further reductions in the sub-strategic nuclear forces, the Western Group of States, members of the Atlantic Alliance, stated the following in the July 1990 London Declaration:

> "The political and military changes in Europe, and the prospects of further changes, now allow the Allies concerned to go further. They will thus modify the size and adapt the tasks of their nuclear deterrent forces. They have concluded that, as a result of the new political and military conditions in Europe, there will be a significantly reduced role for sub-strategic nuclear systems of the shortest range. They have decided specifically that, once negotiations begin on short-range nuclear forces, the Alliance will propose, in return for reciprocal action by the Soviet Union, the elimination of all its nuclear artillery shells from Europe.
>
> "New negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on the reduction of short-range nuclear forces should begin shortly after a CFE agreement is signed. The Allies concerned will develop an arms control framework for these negotiations which takes into account our requirements for far fewer nuclear weapons, and the diminished need for sub-strategic nuclear systems of the shortest range."

The members of the Western Group are actively working for further progress in the field of nuclear disarmament. The Western Group shares the objective of general and complete disarmament, but recognizes that its achievement will require a series of arms control steps in non-nuclear as well as nuclear areas. In these areas all States bear a responsibility.

In closing, the Western Group reiterates its will to continue to pursue vigorously the conclusion of disarmament agreements that enhance the security of all members of the community of nations.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for her statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, Dr. Ola Dahlman, who will introduce the report of the Group, which has been distributed today with the symbol CD/1097.

Mr. DAHLMAN (Sweden): I will today introduce the progress report of the recent meeting of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts, contained in document CD/1097. This meeting, which was the thirty-second session of the Group, took place between 29 July and 9 August 1991. Experts and representatives from 28 countries participated. Representatives from the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the International Maritime Satellite Organization, usually referred to as INMARSAT, participated in parts of the session. The Group enjoyed throughout the session the eminent services of the secretariat.

I am pleased to report to the CD on the successful conduct of the Group's Second Large Technical Test - usually referred to as GSETT-2. The test was conducted as planned between 22 April and 9 June 1991 and included six weeks of continuous data recording and reporting. As I have reported to the CD on earlier occasions this full-scale test has been carefully planned, and detailed instructions were prepared under the guidance of the coordinator of the test, Mr. Peter Basham of Canada. Several preparatory tests have also been conducted during the last two years. This approach, by which facilities needed for the full-scale test were gradually built up in participating countries, turned out to be most useful.

Thirty-four countries participated in the full-scale test. This is an increase of 10 countries compared to the preparatory test. The Ad Hoc Group very much welcomes this broadened participation, which includes also countries in Africa and South America. To a great extent this increased participation was obtained thanks to international cooperative efforts at a national and institute level. Countries having expertise and facilities supported, through bilateral arrangements, the establishment and operation of stations and national data centres in countries having less expertise in seismology.

The cooperative spirit among all participants in the test has been a cornerstone in our test without which we would never had succeeded. Many presentations in the Ad Hoc Group described and welcomed this cooperation and described how instruments, computer hardware and software were exchanged among participating institutes and how experts went to stations or data centres in other countries to help installing new equipment or to make existing computers and programs run properly or even to cope with the heavy workload during the conduct of the experiment.

This experiment has been a practical demonstration of close and successful international cooperation.

I will now try to describe the size and complexity of this full-scale test. The 34 participating countries contributed data from in all 60 seismological stations on all continents including Antarctica. Data were reported on a daily basis from these stations through national data centres to the four experimental international data centres operated in Australia, Sweden, the United States and the Soviet Union. In all more than 30,000 messages were exchanged during the six-week period. Information on more than 100,000 observed seismic signals were reported by the national data

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centres. These reports contained both parameter or level I data, giving a summary description of the observed signals, and the complete and thus more voluminous wave-form or level II data. The total amount of information exchanged would in expert language be described as over 1 gigabyte of data. To get an idea of the large amount of information involved we might think of this 1 gigabyte converted into statements in this very room. It would correspond to a statement that would go on for eight hours a day, seven days a week and that would last for the rest of this century.

The analysis of the 100,000 reported signals conducted at the four experimental international data centres made it possible to define and locate in all 6,000 events all over the globe. Nature challenged us - following a large earthquake in the Caucasus on 29 April several hundreds of aftershocks occurred during a short time. The large amount of data generated by these earthquakes stressed the system and caused overload at several centres, which was a useful experience.

To handle and exchange this amount of information on a global scale is a substantial undertaking even using modern communication technology and computers. We have challenged modern technology and utilized the most modern computer and communication systems available to cope with our task. We have successfully concluded a most extensive and complex experiment which goes beyond what has ever been conducted for scientific purposes in the field of seismology. It is also to my knowledge by far the most extensive multilateral test ever conducted for arms limitation and disarmament purpose. We did not get this for free.

The successful outcome of the test is the result of dedicated work by hundreds of people at seismological stations, and at national and international data centres, who by their enthusiasm, skill and long working days overcame the many practical problems that occurred throughout the test. On behalf of the Ad Hoc Group I wish to express our great appreciation to all these people around the world who so successfully contributed to our work.

At its session the Group reviewed the results and experience obtained at national and experimental international data centres. A large amount of information was brought forward, and only a tentative analysis and assessment could be made during the two-week session. Some preliminary results are compiled and annexed to the progress report; please allow me to make some preliminary comments in that regard.

Despite welcome participation in the full-scale test by a number of new countries the global distribution of participating stations is still uneven with almost half of the participants coming from Europe and few participants in Africa, Central and South America. The test demonstrated the power of the modern array stations, and a vast majority of the observations during the test came from such stations. We have to consider how to utilize this techology, which is becoming cheaper, on a global scale. The demonstration by Germany, to which also members of the CD were invited, was most timely and showed an interesting concept of a "CD station" built on modern technology.

(Mr. Dahlman, Sweden)

The national data centres seem to have been working in a satisfactory way all over the globe. Much effort has been put into these facilities, and it is important to consider how to maintain these facilities which are of crucial importance for a global system.

The international data exchange, between national and international and among the international data centres, which caused great problems during the preparatory experiments, now worked in a most satisfactory way. Data arrived promptly, and only a couple of hundreds out of 30,000 messages were lost, which is a remarkably low figure. It should be possible to improve the communication system even further by using a more homogenous system. Today a great variety of means are being utilized.

Analysis at the experimental international data centres was conducted utilizing both parameter and wave-form data. Parameter data were processed using an essentially automatic procedure, whereas the analysis of wave-form data requires interactive analysis where a seismological expert interacts with a graphic computer screen. The experimental international data centres managed, by and large, to cope with their heavy workload. The time available for comprehensive analysis of wave-form data was however limited. Further analysis of the valuable database collected during the experiment is needed to fully evaluate the full potential of the wave-form analysis. It is expected that such additional analysis will be undertaken at the experimental international data centres prior to the Group's next session.

The purpose of the experiment was, as its name indicates, to test the various technical components of the system. In addition, however, valuable information of a more basic character was obtained. A thorough analysis of this extensive material will take considerable time and has to be conducted in close cooperation with scientific institutions around the world. I will however make a few preliminary observations. The problem of associating observed signals to defined events is still a serious one, and almost half of the signals observed during this test were unassociated in the present analysis. The system designed by the Group is essentially a teleseismic system based on observations in the range of 2,000 to 10,000 km from the stations. It has been clearly demonstrated during this test and in the national scientific contributions to the Group that the observation capabilities at regional distances, e.g. up to 2,000 km from the stations, are very good. This might have an important implication on the design of the system. A third important issue is how to handle, in the context of the global system, the information provided by national seismological networks in individual countries, which is often of very high quality.

The Ad Hoc Group noted that a comprehensive evaluation of the results of GSETT-2 will be a substantial undertaking. It has established five study groups, each headed by a convener, to deal with different aspects of this evaluation work. The Ad Hoc Group will make all efforts to complete a report on a comprehensive evaluation of the technical aspects of the test during the

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spring session of 1992. The full seismological evaluation will need considerably more time, and will be reported on later. In this regard, the Group believes it will be desirable to have facilities available to the extent required for a successful evaluation of GSETT-2.

At the invitation of the Conference on Disarmament a representative of the International Maritime Satellite Organization, INMARSAT, attended a session of the Group and presented information on their global system for information exchange. INMARSAT also conducted a demonstration of its system, which was attended also by members of the Conference. INMARSAT now offers an interesting possibility of providing information exchange on a global scale from seismological and other monitoring stations located in areas where other high-quality means of communication are not available. The Group expressed its appreciation to INMARSAT for its valuable contribution to the Group's work.

The Ad Hoc Group continued preliminary discussion on its future work. It expressed the view that much valuable work can be conducted under its current mandate with regard to international cooperative measures to detect and identify seismic events. The Group expects to be able to develop specific recommendations in this regard during its next session, taking into account the results of GSETT-2.

The Ad Hoc Group suggests that its next session, subject to approval by the Conference on Disarmament, should be convened from 2 to 13 March 1992.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group for introducing the report, as well as for the useful information that he has given the Conference. With regard to the report in document CD/1097, the Ad Hoc Group transmits to us a recommendation contained in paragraph 19 under which it would meet next from 2 to 13 March 1992. I propose to submit the recommendation to the Conference at the next plenary meeting on Thursday, 22 August. Obviously any delegations that wish to make comments on the report contained in document CD/1097 can do so in the plenary then or later as they wish.

I have no further speakers on my list for today. I wonder whether any other delegation wishes to take the floor?

I should like now to refer to another matter. Today the secretariat has circulated a timetable of meetings that the Conference and its subsidiary bodies will hold during the coming week. The timetable was prepared following consultations with the chairmen of the ad hoc committees. As usual the calendar is of an indicative nature and can be amended if necessary. In this respect I should like to point out two changes that were agreed upon during the consultations held this morning in the bureau of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. The first involves the addition of a new meeting of Group C on Tuesday, 20 August at 3 p.m. The second relates to the meeting to be held on Friday, 23 August at 10 a.m. Instead of Group C, this meeting will be

(The President)

allocated to Group B. The secretariat will distribute the revised text in delegations' pigeon-holes. If there is no objection, I will take it that the Conference approves the timetable as amended orally.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I have no other business, and therefore I shall now adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will take place on Thursday, 22 August at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.